

# Dutiya Aññatara Bhikkhu Sutta

The Second Discourse on a Certain Monk

S 22.36/3:36 f

Theme: We are our latent tendencies

Translated by Piya Tan ©2008

## 1 Sutta Summary

There are two Aññatara Bhikkhu Suttas (S 22.35+36), both of which deal with the same topics, namely, latent tendencies (*anusaya*).<sup>1</sup> Both suttas open with a certain unnamed monk asking the Buddha for a teaching so that he could go into solitary retreat. The Annatara Bhikkhu Sutta 2 (S 22.36) records the Buddha as giving this teaching to the monk:

Bhikshu, what lies latent in one, that is what one is measured by;  
by what one is measured, by that one is reckoned  
What lies *not* latent in one, one is *not* measured by that;  
by what one is *not* measured, by that one is *not* reckoned [S4]

The monk then exclaims that he fully understands it, and explains it in detail in terms of each of the five aggregates (form, feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness). The Buddha applauds him. He goes into retreat and in due course becomes an arhat. (S 22.35/3:35 f = SD 31.4)

The commentary to Aññatara Bhikkhu Sutta 1 (S 22.35) explains that if we have a latent tendency towards form by way of sensual lust, etc, then we are described in terms of that latent tendency as being lustful, hated or deluded. But when that latent tendency is absent, one is not reckoned so. (SA 3:265). Bodhi adds an interesting note in this connection:

Additionally, we might suppose that, one is reckoned not only by way of the defilements, but even more prominently by way of the aggregate with which one principally identifies. One who inclines to form is reckoned as a “physical” person, who inclines to feeling a “hedonist,” one who inclines to perception an “aesthete” (or fact-gatherer?), one who inclines to volition a “man of action,” one who inclines to consciousness a thinker, etc. (S:B 1053 n47)

## 2 Key teaching

2.1 *ANUMĪYATI*. The key teaching of the Aññatara Bhikkhu Sutta 2 (S 22.36) is as follows:

Bhikshu, what lies latent in one, that is what one is measured by;  
by what one is measured, by that one is reckoned  
What lies *not* latent in one, one is *not* measured by that;  
by what one is *not* measured, by that one is *not* reckoned

*Yam kho, bhikkhu, anuseti tam anumīyati;  
yam anumīyati tena saṅkham gacchati.*

*Yam nānuseti na tam anumīyati;  
yam nānumīyati na tena saṅkham gacchatī ti.*

(S 22.36.4/3:36) = SD 31.14

The key word in this passage is the rare term, *anumīyati* (also written as *anu-miyyati*), which the Critical Pali Dictionary (CPD) defines as the passive of \**anu-mināti*, that is, *anu* + √MĀ [“to measure”], cog-

<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed study, see *Anusaya* = SD 31.3.

nate with the Sanskrit *anu-mīyate*. \**Anumināti* (a reconstructed Pali word) means “to take a measure after, to draw an inference (from),” and is found in the Peta, vatthu Commentary as *anuminanta* (present participle), as *dhammaṃ sutvā tad anusārena nayaṃ nento anuminanto*, “When you have heard the Dharma, you can draw your own conclusion [inference]” (PvA 227,21).

The future passive participle (with an imperative or optative sense)<sup>2</sup> *anuminitabba* (“it is to be measured; it should be measured”) is found, understandably, in the **Anumāna Sutta** (M 15/1:97,18) governing an accusative: *bhikkhunā attanā va attānaṃ anuminitabbaṃ* (vl *anumanitabbaṃ*), “(a monk) himself ought to infer about himself (thus)....”<sup>3</sup> The noun form is *anumāna*, which forms the title of the Sutta. Otherwise, these forms do not seem occur anywhere in the Pali Canon.

The term *anumāna* plays an important role in mediaeval Indian philosophy. The Indian Buddhist philosopher and logician Dignāga (c 480-540), a disciple of Vasubandhu, postulate two forms of knowledge, that is, perception (*pratyakṣa*) and inference (*anumāna*). Perception, that is, knowledge arising through direct physical sensing (of the eye, ear, nose, tongue and body), is free from all conceptual constructions, including name and class concepts. In other words, he regards only pure *sensation* as perception.<sup>4</sup> Inference (*anumāna*) is based on reason and logic.<sup>5</sup>

2.2 COMMENTARY: *ANUMĪYATI* AS *ANUMARATI*. The Sutta commentary, accepted by the Sub-commentary, explains *anumīyati* as if it were equivalent to the Sanskrit *anumīyate* (“he dies along with”). As such, we would have this impossibly forced commentarial explanation: “With the dying of the latent tendency (*marantena anusayena*), the form that has lain latent dies along (*taṃ anusayitāṃ rūpaṃ...anumarati*). For, when the object is breaking up, the mental factors that take it as object cannot remain.”<sup>6</sup> (SA 2:265).

The Commentary is saying that for one without any latent tendency, there is no more desire for form (or the other aggregates). Clearly this is a technical Abhidhamma interpretation, which though not wrong in itself, does not seem to fit into the Pali passage. However, it does give us a broad sense of what the Sutta passage means.

2.3 *ANUMĪYATI* AS PASSIVE OF *ANUMĪNATI*. The Buddha’s statement here clarifies the famous passage in the Aggī Vaccha, gotta Sutta (M 72) and the **Khemā Therī Sutta** (S 44.1), where the Tathagata is said to be free from reckoning in terms of form (*rūpa, saṅkhā, vimutto*) and the other aggregates, is immeasurable (*appameyyo*), like a great ocean.<sup>7</sup> The full passage from the Aggī Vaccha, gotta Sutta is worth quoting here:

20 “In the same way, Vaccha, the Tathāgata has abandoned the form by which one describing him would use. It is cut off at the root, made like a palm-tree stump, done away with so that it is not subject to further growth.

The Tathāgata, Vaccha, is liberated from reckoning in terms of form: he is profound, immeasurable, unfathomable as the great ocean so that

‘arises’ does not apply,  
‘does not arise’ does not apply,  
‘both arises and does not arise’ does not apply,  
‘neither arises nor not arise’ does not apply.

<sup>2</sup> See AK Warder, *Introduction to Pali*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, 1974: 104-107.

<sup>3</sup> M 15.6/1:97,18 = SD 59.3.

<sup>4</sup> Dignāga discusses perception in ch 1 of *Pramāṇa Samuccaya*: see Hayes 1980: 221 (§1.2 (1)). As in early Buddhist *saññā*, percepts (for Dignāga) also include, besides those of the five physical senses, all mental events (even those that are not perceptions), ie the contents of the sixth sense, mind (*manas*): see Hayes 1980: 224 (§1.31), 227 (§1.331).

<sup>5</sup> See **Language and Discourse** = SD 26.11 (8.2).

<sup>6</sup> *Taṃ anumīyatī ti taṃ anusayitāṃ rūpaṃ marantena anusayena anumarati. Na hi ārammaṇe bhijjāmāne tad-ārammaṇā dhammā tiṭṭhanti. Yaṃ anumīyatī ti yaṃ rūpaṃ yena anusayena anumarati.* (SA 2:265). See S:B 1053 n49 (where Bodhi’s mistr made him take the comy explanation as “ludicrous”).

<sup>7</sup> M 72.20/1:487 f (SD 6.15) = S 44.1/4:376 f (SD 63.6).

The Tathāgata has abandoned the feeling by which one describing him would use. It is cut off at the root, ...not subject to further growth.

The Tathāgata, Vaccha, is liberated from reckoning in terms of feeling: he is profound, immeasurable, unfathomable as the great ocean so that *the four alternatives do not apply*.

The Tathāgata has abandoned the perception by which one describing him would use. It is cut off at the root, ...not subject to further growth.

The Tathāgata, Vaccha, is liberated from reckoning in terms of perception: he is profound, immeasurable, unfathomable as the great ocean so that *the four alternatives do not apply*.

The Tathāgata has abandoned the formations by which one describing him would use. It is cut off at the root, ...not subject to further growth.

The Tathāgata, Vaccha, is liberated from reckoning in terms of formations: he is profound, immeasurable, unfathomable as the great ocean so that *the four alternatives do not apply*.

The Tathāgata has abandoned the consciousness by which one describing him would use. It is cut off at the root, made like a palm-tree stump, done away with so that it is not subject to further growth.

The Tathāgata, Vaccha, is liberated from reckoning in terms of consciousness: he is profound, immeasurable, unfathomable as the great ocean so that 'arises' does not apply, 'does not arise' does not apply, 'both arises and does not arise' does not apply, 'neither arises nor not arise' does not apply."<sup>8</sup>  
(M 72.20/1:487 f) = SD 6.15

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<sup>8</sup> The great ocean simile here is balanced by the previous fire simile (M 72.18-19/1:487): see SD 6.15 Intro (6).

## The Second Discourse on a Certain Monk

S 22.36/3:36 f

Originating in Sāvattihī.

### A certain monk asks for a teaching

- 1 In a monastery-park...near Sāvattihī.
- 2 Then a certain monk approached the Blessed One. Having saluted the Blessed One, he sat down at one side.  
Seated thus at one side, the monk said this to the Blessed One:
- 3 “It is good for me, bhante! Let the Blessed One teach the Dharma in brief, so that having heard the Dharma from the Blessed One, I might dwell alone, aloof, diligent, exertive, and resolute.”<sup>9</sup>

### The teaching on latent tendencies in brief

- 4 “Bhikshu, what lies latent in one, that is what one is measured by;  
one is reckoned by what one is measured by.  
What lies *not* latent in one, one is *not* measured by that;  
one is *not* reckoned by what one is *not* measured by.”<sup>10</sup>  
“Understood, Blessed One! Understood, Sugata [Well-gone One]!”
- 5 “So, bhikshu, how do you understand in detail the meaning of what is stated in brief?”

### The teaching on latent tendencies in detail

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| 6 “Bhante,<br>if one has a latent tendency regarding <u>form</u> ,<br>by what one is measured, by that one is reckoned.   | then one is measured by it;              |
| if one has a latent tendency regarding <u>feeling</u> ,<br>by what one is measured, by that one is reckoned.  | then one is measured by it;              |
| if one has a latent tendency regarding <u>perception</u> ,<br>by what one is measured, by that one is reckoned.   | then one is measured by it;              |
| if one has a latent tendency regarding <u>formations</u> ,<br>by what one is measured, by that one is reckoned.   | then one is measured by them;            |
| if one has a latent tendency regarding <u>consciousness</u> ,<br>by what one is measured, by that one is reckoned.  | then one is measured by it;              |
| 7a Bhante,<br>if one does <i>not</i> have a latent tendency regarding <u>form</u> , [37]<br>by what one is <i>not</i> measured, by that one is <i>not</i> reckoned; | then one is <i>not</i> measured by it;   |
| if one does <i>not</i> have a latent tendency regarding <u>feeling</u> ,<br>by what one is <i>not</i> measured, by that one is <i>not</i> reckoned;                 | then one is <i>not</i> measured by it;   |
| if one does <i>not</i> have a latent tendency regarding <u>perception</u> ,<br>by what one is <i>not</i> measured, by that one is <i>not</i> reckoned;              | then one is <i>not</i> measured by it;   |
| if one does not have a latent tendency regarding <u>formations</u> ,  | then one is <i>not</i> measured by them; |

<sup>9</sup> *Eko vūpakaṭṭho appamatto ātāpino pahit’atto vihareyyaṃ*. This is stock: V 2:258; M 1:177; A 2:258, 3:218; U 24. The first word, “alone” (*ekā*) refers to bodily aloneness and physical solitude; “aloof” (*vūpakaṭṭha*) is mental solitude; often this word alone refers to a practitioner’s effort to rid the mind of sensual thoughts (M 36/1:246f = 85/2:93); “exertive” (*ātāpī*) is putting forth both physical and effort; “resolute” (*pahit’atta*), “mentally resolute” by absence of longing regarding the body or life itself (MA 1:180). Also as *ekā vūpakaṭṭhā appamattā ātāpino pahit’attā vihareyya* (V 2:258; A 3:218 (Ke Se ekeka...), 4:280). Sometimes the initial *ekā* is omitted in the pericope.

<sup>10</sup> *Yam kho, bhikkhu, anuseti taṃ anumīyati; yaṃ anumīyati tena saṅkham gacchati. Yam nānuseti na taṃ anumīyati; yaṃ nānumīyati na tena saṅkham gacchatī ti*. On this key passage, see Intro (2).

by what one is *not* measured, by that one is *not* reckoned;  
 if one does *not* have a latent tendency regarding consciousness, then one is *not* measured by it;  
 by what one is *not* measured, by that one is *not* reckoned.

7b In this way, bhante, have I understood in detail the meaning of what has been spoken in brief by the Blessed One.”

### The Buddha’s approval

8a “Sadhu, sadhu, bhikshu! It is good that you, bhikshu, have understood in detail the meaning of what has been spoken in brief by me!

8b Bhikshu,  
 if one has a latent tendency regarding form, then one is measured by it;  
 by what one is measured, by that one is reckoned.  
 if one has a latent tendency regarding feeling, then one is measured by it;  
 by what one is measured, by that one is reckoned.  
 if one has a latent tendency regarding perception, then one is measured by it;  
 by what one is measured, by that one is reckoned.  
 if one has a latent tendency regarding formations, then one is measured by them;  
 by what one is measured, by that one is reckoned.  
 if one has a latent tendency regarding consciousness, then one is measured by it;  
 by what one is measured, by that one is reckoned.

8c Bhikshu,  
 if one does *not* have a latent tendency regarding form, [37] then one is *not* measured by it;  
 by what one is *not* measured, by that one is *not* reckoned;  
 if one does *not* have a latent tendency regarding feeling, then one is *not* measured by it;  
 by what one is *not* measured, by that one is *not* reckoned;  
 if one does *not* have a latent tendency regarding perception, then one is *not* measured by it;  
 by what one is *not* measured, by that one is *not* reckoned;  
 if one does not have a latent tendency regarding formations, then one is *not* measured by them;  
 by what one is *not* measured, by that one is *not* reckoned;  
 if one does *not* have a latent tendency regarding consciousness, then one is *not* measured by it;  
 by what one is *not* measured, by that one is *not* reckoned.

8d In this way, bhante, have I understood in detail the meaning of what has been spoken in brief by the Blessed One.”

### The monk awakens

9 Then, the monk, having joyfully approved of the Buddha’s word, rose from his seat, saluted the Blessed One, and keeping the Blessed One to his right, departed.

10 <sup>11</sup>Then, dwelling alone, aloof, diligent, exertive, and resolute, that monk, having right here and now realized it for himself through direct knowledge, dwelt in that supreme goal of the holy life, for the sake of which sons of family<sup>12</sup> rightly go forth from the household life into homelessness.

He directly knew:<sup>13</sup> “Birth is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, done what had to be done, there is no more of this state of being.”

<sup>11</sup> This whole section is stock: for refs, see **Poṭṭhapāda S** (D 9.56b/1:203) n = SD 7.14.

<sup>12</sup> *Kula,puttā* are of 2 kinds: those who are born so (*jāti kula,puttā*), and those who are so by conduct (*ācāra kula,puttā*). Either the second (which is all inclusive) is meant (DA 2:363), or both is meant (MA 1:180).

<sup>13</sup> He knows all this by “review knowledge” (*paccavekkhaṇa,ñāṇa*). “Birth is destroyed” (*khīṇā jāti*) ie, he knows if he had not fully cultivated the path, that one, four, or five of the aggregates would arise (ie he would be reborn, respectively, as a non-conscious being, or a formless being, or a form being, or a sense-world being); “the holy life has been lived” (*vusitāṃ brahma,carīyaṃ*): the 7 learners (*sekha*) and the good worldling are said to “be living the holy life,” but he has *lived* it because he has destroyed his influxes; “done what had to be done” (*katam*

11 And that certain monk became one of the arhats.

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*karaṇīyam*): he has understood the noble truths in all their 16 aspects, ie, their full understanding, abandonment, realization, and cultivation by the four paths; “there is no more for this state of being” (*nāparam itthattāya*): he does not have to complete his understanding of the truths any more, and beyond the present aggregates, there are none, for they are like fire without fuel (DA 1:225 in detail; MA 1:180 f in brief). For a full tr of Comy and Subcomy here, see Bodhi (tr), *The Discourse on the Fruits of Recluship*, 1989: 165-168.